(c) by when it is likely to be formulated and effective measures being taken or proposed to be taken by Government in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) to (c) No formal policy document has been formulated. However, the Government Mission includes protection and preservation of all protected mounments and all forms of cultural assets and heritage, both tangible and intangible. A number of institutions such as the Archaeological Survey of India, National Archives of India, Anthropological Survey of India, Institutes of Buddhist and Tibetan Studies, National Museums, Libraries, Akademies-Sangeet Natak, Lalit Kala, and Sahitya- and National School of Drama have been constituted for this purpose. In addition, the Government is providing grants under various schemes to individuals and institutions including registered societies, trusts and Non-Governmental organisations for achieving the above policy objective.

New areas of tourism interest

986. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the total earnings generated by the tourism sector in the country, during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that the tourism potential has not been tapped to the maximum;

(c) if so, the constraints in this regard;

(d) whether it is also a fact that Indian tourism industry is suffering on account of lack of infrastructure facilities and security for the tourists, lack of publicity in and outside the country and failure to identify new areas of tourism interest; and

(e) if so, the measures taken/proposed to be taken to address these and other related shortcomings?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) The foreign exchange earnings through tourism during the years 2000, 2001 and 2002 are Rs. 14238 crores, Rs. 14344 crores and Rs. 14195 crores respectively. Since July 2002 foreign exchange earnings picked up and there was a 10.65% increase between July-December 2002 as compared to the same period in year 2001.

(b) to (d) The main constraints facing the tourism sector in India include poor quality of infrastructure and environment in and around many of main tourist sites, the security scenario in the region that affects the perception of India as a safe and secure destination, inadequate quantity and quality of transportation service and related infrastructure, lack of facilitation services at entry points, limited availability of tourist information in source markets, etc. The Government has emphasised on the new and emerging areas of tourism interest and the tourism policy announced in 2002 provides for exploiting the country's potentialities in these areas.

(e) Various steps taken by the Government to address the constraints faced by the tourism sector include:-

* Direct approach to the consumers through Electronic and Print media through new and catchy messages.
* Creation of World Class Collaterals.
* Centralized Electronic Media Campaign.
* Direct co-operative marketing with the Airlines, tour operators and wholesalers overseas.
* To attach greater focus in the emerging markets particularly in the region of China, North East Asia and South East Asia.
* Participation in Trade Fairs and Exhibitions.
* Optimize Editorial PR and Publicity.
* Use of Internet and web marketing.
* Generating Tourist Publications.
* Re-enforced hospitality programmes including grant of air passages to invite the media personnel, tour operators on familiarization tour to India to get first hand knowledge on various tourism products.

In addition to the above, the Deptt. of Tourism, Govt. of India has the following short-term and long-term Plans to promote tourism in the country:

* Positioning and maintaining tourism development as a National priority activity;
* Enhancing and maintaining the competitiveness of India as a tourism destination;
* Improving India's existing tourism products and expanding these to meet new market requirements;
* Creation of world class infrastructure;
* Special thrust to rural and small segment toruism;
* Attention to civilizational issues and issues pertaining to civic administration, good governance and also of social and cultural values; and
* Development of tourism circuits and tourism-cum-cultural hubs.

Joint marketing of tourism in South India

987. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any action has been taken for joint marketing of tourism in South India to increase international tourist arrivals;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action proposed to facilitate early entry of foreign airlines into various South Indian metros to boost tourism?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) to (c) Promotion of various tourism products of different regions in India including South India is an ongoing process which is undertaken by the Indian tourism Offices Overseas through advertising in the electronic and print Media, participation in fairs and exhibitions, inviting of media personalities and tour operators under the Hospitality Programme, dissemination of information through CD ROMs and brochures, web marketing, organizing of seminars and food festivals etc.

To improve air connectivity and increase seat capacity bilateral talks for aviation rights between countries are held from time to time by the Ministry of Civil Aviation.